DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 416 544 CS 509 741

AUTHOR McDowell, Earl E.; McDowell, Carlene E.
TITLE An Exploratory Study To Determine Differences between Gender Groups, among Age Groups, and among Talkaholic Groups in Rating Talkativeness and Communication Style Variables.
PUB DATE 1998-04-03
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Communication Association (Chicago, IL, April 1-5, 1998).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Age Groups; Communication Research; Higher Education; *Interpersonal Communication; *Sex Differences; Statistical Analysis; Undergraduate Students; *Verbal Communication
IDENTIFIERS *Communication Styles; Exploratory Studies; *Talkaholics; Variables

ABSTRACT

A study examined the differences between gender groups in different age groups and their relationships between talkaholic scores and communication styles. Subjects were 125 oral communication students at a midwestern university, who were asked to complete the Talkaholic Scale and Communication Style Instrument. Males were found to have a more dominant communication style, are more contentious, use more hostile verbs, are more assertive than females, and are more precise as they focus on instrumental, objective, analytical, and problematic aspects. Females, in contrast, use open, friendly, animated, and attentive styles, show greater social sensitivity, and use a wider range of nonverbal expressions of emotions. Significant differences also occurred among age groups. The 18-21 age group has the lowest talkaholic scores while the 25+ group has the highest scores. There are no differences between the high talkaholic group and the other groups on precise scores and contentious, seeming to indicate that high talkaholics enjoy talking but are not condescending toward others. (Contains 6 tables of data and 14 references). (CR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 416 544

An Exploratory Study to Determine Differences between Gender Groups, among Age Groups and among Talkaholic Groups in Rating Talkativeness and Communication Style Variables

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

E. McDowell

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

By
Earl E. McDowell
University of Minnesota
Department of Rhetoric
64 Classroom Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55108

Carlene E. McDowell
Language Arts Department
Burnsville Senior High School
Burnsville, MN

Central States Communication Association
Chicago
April 3, 1998

CS 509741

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

" An Exploratory Study to Determine Differences between Gender Groups, among Age Groups, and Among Talkaholic Groups in Rating Talkativeness and Communication Style Variables."

Abstract

The results indicate that significant differences occurred between gender groups on talkaholic scores, dramatic scores, precise scores, relaxed scores, friendly scores, attentive scores, animated scores and communicator image score. Significant differences also occurred among age groups on talkaholic, dramatic, attentive, and animated scores. In addition, significant differences occurred among talkaholic groups in rating impression leaving, dramatic, dominant, related attentive and animated variables. The specific differences as well as the relationships among the variables will be discussed in the paper.

For the past half-century research on the communication behavior of college students has been completed in the fields of communication and psychology. Much research has been completed on the impact of talkativeness on interpersonal perceptions such as source credibility, leadership ability, interpersonal attraction, powerfulness, and attitude similarity (Allgeier, 1974; Daly, McCroskey & Richmond, 1976, 1977; Hayes & Meltzer, 1972; Hayes & Sievers, 1972). After surveying much of the literature, McCroskey and Richmond (1993) concluded that the more a person talks, the more that person is perceived to be credible, a leader, interpersonally attractive, powerful, and to have similar attitudes to those of the perceiver.

In Addition, in other research Norton (1978), author of the Communication Style Instrument, defined style "as the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered and understood." Prior to the development of the instrument he reviewed studies dealing with self-disclosure, interpersonal interaction, nonverbal communication, and social sex roles.

Montgomery and Norton (1981) developed a review of literature on communication style focusing on differences between gender groups. The review indicated that males have a more dominant communication style, are more contentious, use more hostile

verbs, and are more assertive than females (Eakins and Eakins, 1978). Other results revealed that males are more precise as they focus on instrumental, objective, analytical, and problematic aspects of situations, whereas females focus on the socio-emotional aspects. Aries (1978) concluded that males engage in dramatizing, storytelling, jumping from one anecdote to another and receive camaraderie through the sharing of closeness and laughter.

Female, in contrast, utilized open, friendly, animated, and attentive styles. For example, Henley (1977) asserted that females are more attentive, show greater social sensitivity, and utilize more nonverbal cues such as smiling, nodding, posture, and eye gaze. In short, females are more animated than males, using a wider range of nonverbal expressions of emotions.

Overall, the results of the review indicated that males have a greater potential to employ dominant, contentious, precise, relaxed, and dramatic styles than females, while females have a greater potential to employ open, friendly, attentive and animated styles than males. Other research has focused on students' preferences for their interpersonal communication with their teachers. McDowell (1990) concluded that friendly and attentive styles followed by relaxed, impression leaving, animated, dramatic, open precise, dominant and contentious were the most preferred styles of students.

An examination of the literature revealed that no previous research has been completed to compare subjects talkaholic scores with communication style variables scores. That is, what are the relationships between talkaholic scores and communication style scores? Are there differences between gender groups in rating talkaholic scores and communication style scores? Are there differences between age groups in rating the talkaholic scores and communication style scores? Will subjects operationally defined as high talkaholic rate communication style variables differently that subjects defined as moderate talkaholics or low talkaholics?

In this study 125 students enrolled at a midwestern university in oral communication classes were asked to complete the Talkaholic Scale and Communication Style Instrument. Specific research questions are stated below:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Will there be significant relationships ($p < .05$) between talkaholic scores and communication style variables scores?
2. Will there be significant relationships ($p. < 05$) among communication style variables?
3. Will there be significant differences ($p < .05$) between the means of gender groups in terms of their talkaholic scores and in terms of communication style variable scores in interpersonal communication situations?

4. Will there be significant differences ($p < .05$) among age groups (18-21, 22-25, 25+) in talkaholic scores and in terms of communication style variable scores in interpersonal communication situations?

5. Will there be significant differences ($p < .05$) among the means of talkaholic groups (high, medium and Low) in terms of communication style variables scores in interpersonal communication situations?

THE TALKAHOLIC SCALE

The first characteristic of the talkaholic's behavior is compulsives. The second characteristic of the talkaholic is self-awareness. That is, this person is aware that her/his talking behavior is seen as excessive by others. The third characteristic of the talkaholic is the manifestation of behavior that is not just above the norm, but is highly deviant. The final characteristic of the talkaholic is that she/he will continue to communicate even though he/she knows it is not in her/his own best interest.

The development of the Talkaholic Scale by McCroskey and Richmond (1993), was based on the characteristics described above. A total of 25 items were generated. The measure was completed by 816 college students on the first day of class in basic courses in communication studies. Students were asked to rate each item on 1 to 5 scale: (5) strongly agree that it applies; (4) agree that it applies; (3) are undecided, (2) disagree that it applies, or (1) strongly

disagree that it applies. Students were instructed that there are no right or wrong answer. The data were submitted to iterated principal components factor analysis with oblique (varimax) rotation. Ten items with their loadings on the first factor were selected to become the focal items on the Talkaholic Scale. Test-retest reliability is .76.

COMMUNICATION STYLE INSTRUMENT

The revised form of the Communication Style Instrument, developed by Norton (1978), was used in this study. The instrument asked responded to rate the items based on their interpersonal communication in dyadic communication situations and their interpersonal communication in group communication situations. The instrument consists of eleven subconstructs: impression leaving, contentious, open, dramatic, dominant, precise, relaxed, friendly, attentive, animated, and communicator image. Each subcontruct consists of four items which subjects rated from 1 to 5 using the Likert Scale from strongly agree through strongly disagree.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were completed to determine the relationships between talkaholic scores and communication style variable scores and among communication style variable scores. One way analyses were completed to determine differences between gender groups, age groups (18-21, 22-25, and 25+) and talkaholic level groups (high, medium and low). Post hoc

analysis using the standard deviation were used to classify subjects into low,. medium and high talkaholic groups. Subjects scoring one standard deviation above the mean were classified as high talkaholics, subjects within one standard deviation of the mean are classified as medium talkaholics, and subjects one standard deviation below the mean were classified are low talkaholics. Initially, three-way analyses of variables were completed to check for interaction effects. Post hoc analyses using the Scheffe procedure were used to determine differences between age groups and talkaholic level groups on dependent variables.

RESULTS

The Results indicate that 125 subjects participated in the study. This included the following: Gender groups (male=63; female=72), Age groups (18-21=36; 22-25=69; and 25+=30), and Talkaholic level groups (low= 42: medium=47; and high=36) The correlational analyses reported in Table 1, reveal that there were significant relationships ($p < .001$) between talkaholic scores and dramatic scores, between talkaholic scores and relaxed scores, and between talkaholic scores and animated scores. Table 2 reports significant differences occurred between gender groups in rating talkaholic scores, dramatic scores, precise score, relaxed scores, friendly scores, attentive scores, animated scores and communicator image scores. Significant differences also occurred among age groups on talkaholic, dramatic, attentive, and animated scores. In addition, significant differences also occurred among age groups in rating impression

leaving and dominant items (see Table 3). Table 4 reports differences among talkaholic level groups. The results indicate that significant differences occurred among talkaholic groups in rating impression leaving, dramatic, dominant, relaxed, attentive, and animated variables.

Post hoc analyses using the Scheffe procedure were completed between age level groups and between talkaholic level groups on significant dependent measure scores.. The results, reported in Table 5, revealed that significant differences occurred between 18-21 vs 22-25 groups on talkaholic scores, dramatic scores, relaxed scores, attentive scores, and animated scores, between 18-21 vs 25+ groups on talkaholic scores, impression leaving scores, relaxed scores, and attentive scores, and between 22-25 vs 25+ group on relaxed scores and animated scores.

DISCUSSION

The results reveal that significant relationships exist between talkaholic scores and dramatic scores, relaxed scores, and attentive scores. Post hoc analysis using stepwise discriminant function analyses indicated that dramatic scores account for 26 percent of the variance and when relaxed and animated are added this accounts for 50 percent of the variance. An interpretation of these relationships seem to indicate that a person who is a high talkaholic uses dramatic, relaxed and attentive styles when communicating with others. Other relationships among communication style

variables support previous research. That is, there are significant relationships between impression leaving and relaxed, impression leaving and attentive, impression leaving and communicator image, between open and friendly, between open and animated, between relaxed and attentive, between relaxed and animated, between relaxed and communicator image, as well as between friendly and communicator image, between attentive and animated and between animated and communicator image. Although these results are significant, for the most part the correlations account for only about 20 percent of the variance.

The gender results reveal that wide significant differences ($p < .001$) occurred between gender groups on talkaholic scores. An examination of the means for each of the 10-items indicates that females rated all 10-items higher than males. Other results support previous research as males have significantly higher ($p < .05$) dramatic scores and precise scores, while females have significantly higher scores ($p < .05$) in rating friendly, attentive, animated and communicator image variables.

The age results show that the 18-21 age group have the lowest talkaholic scores while the 25+ group has the highest scores. In fact, the Scheffe results reveal significant differences ($p < .0001$) . This means that the 25+ group admit that they talk when they know they should be quiet and are compulsive talkers. Research is needed to determine if this group perceives themselves as having more

credibility, more power, more leadership ability than other age groups. The other results show that the 25+ group rate themselves higher on impression leaving, dominant, relaxed, attentive, and animated. These results reveal that the old students uses a variety of styles in communicating in interpersonal communication situations. The talkaholic level results revealed that the high level group rated impression leaving, dominant, relaxed significant higher than the low group. The results seem to indicate that the high level groups use a variety of style when communicating in interpersonal communication situation. In addition, the medium talkaholic group also is more dramatic, more relaxed, more attentive, and more animated than the low group. significant differences also exist between medium and high groups. That is the high group is more relaxed, more attentive and more animated.

Overall an interpretation of the results seem to indicate that high talkaholic use a variety of styles including. impression leaving, dominant and, relaxed. In addition, although not significant, the group had higher open, dramatic, friendly and communicator image scores.. There are no differences between the high talkaholic group and the other groups on precise scores and contentious. These finding seem to indicate that high talkaholic enjoy talking, but are not condescending toward others,. The results of this exploratory study suggest that more research should be completed. For example, the following research questions might be explored:

1. Will subjects classified as high talkaholics rate an extroversion scale higher than subjects who would be classified as moderate or low talkaholics?

2. Will subjects classified as high talkaholics rate themselves as low apprehensives on the dyadic items of the PRCA-24 instrument while subjects who are classified as moderate or low talkaholics rate themselves as moderate or high apprehensives?

3. Will subjects classified as high talkaholics rate themselves as more willing to communicate than subjects classified as moderate or low talkaholics?

4. Will subjects classified as high talkaholics rate themselves as low apprehensives on the Receiver Apprehension test (RAT), while subjects who are classified as moderate or low talkaholics rate themselves as moderate or high apprehensive? .

5. Are subjects who are high talkaholics more likely to be classified as androgynous or masculine than subjects who are as moderate or low talkaholics?

6. In a small group communication discussion group will subjects who are classified as high talkaholics talk more than subjects classified as moderate or low talkaholicss?

   a. What types of comments will high talkaholic use?

   b. What types of comments will moderate and/or low talkaholic use?

c. What type of comments and frequency of comments would occur if homogeneous talkaholic groups were asked to discuss a timely issue?

Based on the results of these studies theories can be developed to help understand the behaviors of high, medium and low talkaholic groups.

REFERENCES

Aires, E. (1977) "Male-Female interpersonal styles in all male, all female, and mixed groups.in Beyond Sex Roles. Ed. Alice Sargent, St. St. Paul , MN: West Publishing.

Alligeier, A. (1974). "The effects of differential amounts of talkativeness on interpersonal judgment." Unpublished dissertation. W. Lafayette, IN: Purdue University.

Andersen. J., Norton, R., & Nussbaum, J. (1981). "Three investigations exploring relationships between perceived teacher communication behavior and student learning. Communication Education, 377-392..

Daly, J., McCroskey, J., & Richmond, V. (1976). "Judgments of quality, listening, and understanding based upon vocal activity." Southern Speech Communication Journal. 41, 189-197.

Daly, J., McCroskey, J., & Richmond. V. (1977). "Relationships between vocal activity and perception of communicators in small group communication. Western Journal of Speech Communication. 41, 175-187.

Eakins, B. and Eakins, R. (1978). Sex Differences in Human Communication. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hayes, D. & Meltzer, L. (1972). "Interpersonal judgments based on talkativeness: Fact or artifact. Sociometry, 35, 538-561.

Hayes, D., & Sievers. 1972. A sociolinguistic investigation of the dimensions of interpersonal behavior. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 24, 254-261.

Henley, N. (1977). Body Politics: Power, Sex, and Nonverbal Communication. Englewood Cliffs : Prentice-Hall.

McCroskey,J. (1977). "Quiet children and the classroom teacher." Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse of Reading and Communication Skills and Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association

McCroskey, J. & Richmond, V. (1993). "Identifying Compulsive Communicators: The Talkaholic Scale." Communication Research Reports,10, 107-114.

McDowell, E. (1984). "An exploratory study of teachers' perceptions of their communication style when interacting with students," Speech Association of Minnesota Journal, 9, 14-21.

McDowell, E. (1990). "fAculty Views of Advising styles when interacting with Advisees." NACTA Journal, 34, 50-53.

Montgomery, C., & Burgoon, M. (1977). "An experimental study of interactive effects of sex and androgyny on attitude change. Communication Monographs, 44, 130-135.

Table 1
Relationships among Talkaholic and
Communication Style Variables

DV	IL	C	O	DR	DO	PRE	R	F	AT	An	CI
T.	01	.02	.18	.53	.01	-.19	.55	-.01	.11	.42	..003
IL		.40	-.09	.16	.18	-.09	.53	.19	.51	.29	.54
C			.29	.09	.32	.53	-.38	-.16	-.08	-.35	.31
O			.	09	.50	.36	.15	.54	.32	.47	.15
DR					.12	.01	-.16	-.16	.21	-.14	.40
DO						.36	.27	.31	.39	.45	.07
PRE							-.34	.21	-.14	-.15	.44
R								.39	.69	.60	.57
F									.17	.51	.43
AT										.38	.43
AN											.61
CI											

T= Talkaholic Scale
IL=Impression Leaving
C= Contentious
O= Open
DR=Dramatic
DO=Dominant
PRE=Precise
R=Relaxed
F. Friendly
AT=Attentive
AN=Animated
CI=Communicator Image

r= 19 ($p < .05$)

Table 2
Significant Differences between Gender Groups

DV	IV	Means	F	P
Talkaholic	Male	21.71	11.59	.001
	Female	29.41		
Dramatic	Male	13	8.46	.005
	Female	10.708		
Precise	Male	13.71	5.181	.05
	Female	11.58		
Relaxed	Male	11.43	16.39	.0002
	Female	14.17		
Friendly	Male	14	5.587	.05
	Female	15.63		
Attentive	Male	13	4.098	.04
	Female	14.70		
Animated	Male	12.81	14.71	.0004
	Female	15.33		
Comm. Image	Male	13.62	6.876	.01
	Female	15.54		

M=63
F=72

Table 3
Significant Differences among Age Groups

DV	IV	Means	F	P
Talkaholic	18-21	15.83	140.55	.0001
	22-25	22.73		
	25+	30.9		
Impression Leaving	18-21	12.66	5.163	.01
	22-25	14.47		
	25+	15.9		
Dramatic	18-21	10,25	5.283	.01
	22-25	13		
	25+	10.8		
Dominant	18-21	10.66	4.912	.01
	22-25	12.30		
	25+	13.8		
Relaxed	18-21	10.5	16.09	.0001
	22-25	13.04		
	25+	15.4		
Attentive	18-21	11.16	10.41	.001
	22-25	14.78		
	25+	15.2		
Animated	18-21	12.66	8.096	.001
	22-25	13.96		
	25+	16.4		

18-21= 36
22-25= 69
25 = 30

Table 4
Significant Differences among Talkaholic Level Groups

DV	IV	Means	F	P
Impression Leaving	low	12.92	4.326	.001
	medium	14.41		
	high	15.9		
Dramatic	low	10.38	5.121	.001
	medium	13.04		
	high	10.08		
Dominant	low	10.9	4.124	.002
	medium	12.22		
	high	13.8		
Relaxed	low	10.92	12.44	.0001
	medium	12.91		
	high	15.4		
Attentive	low	11.54	8.088	.001
	medium	14.93		
	high	15.2		
Animated	low	12.92		
	medium	13.86		
	high	16.4		

L= 42
M= 47
H= 36

Table 5
Significant Scheffee Results for Age Groups

DV	IV =	P
Talkaholic	18-21 vs 22-25	.001
	18-22 vs 25+	.001
Impression leaving	18-22 vs 25+	.01
Dramatic	18-21 vs 22-25	..01
Relaxed	18-21 vs 22-25	.001
	18-21 vs 25+	.001
	22-25 vs 25+	. ,05
Attentive	18-21 vs 22-25	.002
	18-21 vs 25+	.001
Animated	18-21 vs 25+	.001
	22-25 vs 25+	.005

Table 6
Significant Scheffe Results of Talkaholic Level Groups

DV	IV	P
Impression Leaving	low vs high	.001
Dramatic	low vs medium	.01
Dominant	low vs high	.02
Relaxed	low vs medium	.01
	low vs high	.001
	medium vs high	.0001
Attentive	low vs medium	.001
	medium vs high	.001
Animated	low vs medium	.001
	medium vs high	.001.